

Infant Development Association of California 2008 Board of Directors Biographies

Dora Acosta, MA - San Diego/Imperial County Chapter

My name is Dora Acosta. For the last 17 years I have had the privilege of working in the field of child development. I have a BA in Psychology and a Masters degree in Early Childhood Special Education. I have had a rich career that includes much research in how children acquire a second language. I work as an early interventionist and I learn every day from the families I visit. Experience in these areas, as well as administration, supervision, education, and my Mexican background give me the skills and strength that are necessary in this diverse community. I have been a member of IDA for several years and I consider it an honor to serve as a board member on the IDA San Diego/Imperial County Chapter.

Judy Anderson, MA - San Diego/Imperial County Chapter

My name is Judy Anderson and I am a social worker with the Hope Infant Family Support. I have worked with the program for 30 years, first and as a teaching assistant and as a social worker since 1993. I have a 38-year old daughter, Cindy, who is multiply handicapped. Being Cindy's mother is what guided me to the field of early intervention. Supporting families in recognizing their strengths and exploring ways to cope with their issues, is what led me into the field of social work. I received my Masters in Social Work and a Pupil Personnel Service credential in 1993. I have participated in collaborative community committees and belong to professional organizations that promote best practice services and the wellbeing of young children and their families. I have a strong commitment to supporting parents, Hope staff and the early intervention community in relationship-based practice and the social/emotional development of young children. I am excited about having an IDA chapter in San Diego and know it will support the early intervention community in providing the best service to families.

Cindy Arstein-Kerslake, MA - River Valley Chapter

My name is Cindy Arstein-Kerslake. I have worked as a research and evaluation consultant in the field of early intervention and early mental health for the past 12 years. During that time I have worked to promote the role of families in the education of their children by co-authoring CDE's Handbook on Family Involvement and a study on family involvement activities in California early education programs. From 1999 to 2005 I served as the evaluator for the infant and early mental health initiatives under 3 different funding sources. As part of that work I helped to develop and implement the Infant Preschool Family Mental Health Clinical Services Study which produced evidence of the effectiveness of relationship-based approaches to early mental health services for children ages birth to five and their families. Over the past three years I've consulted for the California First 5 Special Needs Project as a trainer on screening tools and in the promotion of infant and early mental health.

My educational background is in psychology. My job as a mother to three girls, one with a developmental disability, is my inspiration and the driving force behind all that I do. I serve as President of the board of directors for the WarmLine Family Resource Center and have been involved with this FRC in various capacities since it was created. Currently I am working for WestEd Center for Child and Family Studies as the Map to Inclusive Childcare coordinator and consult with Desired Results Access and SEEDS.

Janel Astor, MA - Northern California Chapter

My name is Janel Astor and I am the Director of Children's Development Services for Community Association for Rehabilitation, Inc. (C.A.R.). I have been with the agency since 1994 working primarily with the birth to three population in our Early Intervention program, but also added the 3-5 year old population in 2004 when we opened our preschool site, Milestones. This program is an inclusive preschool serving children with and without disabilities. I hold a Bachelors degree in Child Development, a Masters in Special Education and a Birth-5 California teaching credential. I am also a certified Infant Massage Instructor. In addition to my work at C.A.R. I am a part-time instructor at San Jose State University in the Early Childhood Special Education Department and provide supervision for their teacher training program.

Karen Baas, BS - Northern California Chapter

My name is Karen Baas. I have a BS in the field of Early Childhood Education and Special Education. I have an additional Master's level certificate in Early Intervention. I am currently attending graduate school and hope to receive my Master's degree in Human Development in approximately 18 months. I have worked with children who have special needs and their families for 15 years; 11 of those years have been devoted to early intervention. For the past six years, I have served as Director of Early Intervention Services at Kidango where my main focus has been concentrated in advocacy for inclusion and implementing the principles of relationship-based practices and reflective supervision throughout the organization. In the community, I am involved with committees/projects in Alameda County and Santa Clara County that support inclusion and infant mental health. I am a certified WestEd PITC (Program for Infant Toddler Caregivers) trainer as well as a consultant for the Beginning Together project through WestEd. I am honored to be serving as the Northern Chapter's co-chair and continue to look forward to working with the IDA Board who has shown such enthusiastic dedication to best practices in the field of early intervention.

Robin Bent, BS – River Valley Chapter

My name is Robin Bent. I served as the State Secretary of IDA for the past five years. I have a Bachelor's degree in Child Development from UC Davis and teaching credentials in elementary education and special education. I have been in the field of special education since 1974 and early childhood special education since 1980. The zero to three population is my passion and I feel that by serving in the IDA organization I can stay informed and be part of the future best practices for services to young children with special needs and their families.

Fran Chasen, MA - Southern California Chapter

I am an Early Childhood consultant specializing in early intervention services, funding, and program development for children's services. Currently, I participate on several Boards and Commissions (Interagency Coordinating Council, LA County Child Care Coordinating Committee, Inclusion Committee, Co-Chair) at the state and county levels relating to young children and their families. One of my focuses is introducing leadership and advocacy skills to individuals working with this population as the Public Policy Chairperson for the Southern California Association for the Education of Young Children, Council for Exceptional Children, CAL-DEC and the Infant Development Association of California.

Gayle Coonce, MA - San Diego/Imperial County Chapter

For the past 14 years, I have been involved with educational infant programs providing Early Start services to infants and their families in San Diego County. Beginning as a Program Specialist for the East County SELPA in 1994, I worked directly with representatives of the three districts' infant programs in East County (Lakeside, La Mesa/Spring Valley and Cajon Valley Districts) to facilitate the implementation of quality programs and services. I worked for the four years as the Program Manager for Special Education Early Childhood program in San Diego City Schools, overseeing services to 280 infants and 1500 preschoolers. During this time, I also served as the Chair of the Part C Administrative Team of San Diego County, an interagency committee providing input and oversight to local programs. Currently, I am the Director of Student Services for La Mesa Spring Valley School District, providing special education programs and services to individuals birth through 8th grade.

Jennifer Cooper, MA, Ed - Northern California Chapter

My name is Jennifer Cooper and I have been an IDA board member for the past seven years. I work part-time as a Special Education Placement and Program Consultant, mainly addressing the needs of children ages 3-12. I am the mother of two boys, ages 10 and 7. My 10-year-old has Down syndrome. I have experienced and recognize the importance of quality early intervention and support for families such as my own. I hope to continue my role as a board member and feel eager and qualified to do so.

Molly Coughlin, RN, MN - San Diego/Imperial County Chapter

My name is Molly Coughlin, and I trained as a Clinical Nurse Specialist, University Affiliated Fellow at UCLA back in the 70's, and at that time mainstreaming was a theoretical concept. Since that time I have had the good fortune to participate in bringing the theory into practice, and I currently work as a school nurse in San Diego at the Alcott Infant-Toddler Program. I am happy to be a new member of the IDA board in San Diego, and look forward to meeting the many parents and professionals involved in this wonderful organization.

Gretchen Cypin - River Valley Chapter

I have been a social worker for my professional career. I have worked for a CPS county agency, a HeadStart agency, and licensed family day care homes. The bulk of my career has been in the regional center system. I have worked for three regional centers, with the greater share of years at Alta in Sacramento I have been an Early Intervention Supervisor for ten years. I have been an IDA member for as long as I can remember. I served as the River Valley Chapter Co-chair for two years. I served on the state board as a part of my local responsibilities. I will take on the role of treasurer for the River Valley Chapter in January.

Carla Denner, LCSW - River Valley Chapter

I have over 15 years of experience working with children with special needs ages birth to 5 years and their families. My work experience includes providing play therapy for children of all ages, supervising a home visiting program for first time parents and their infants including those at risk for abuse and neglect, providing parent education at Head Start and other early childhood programs, providing case management and counseling for foster parents and children in foster care, and coordinating a social service program at a preschool for children who were homeless or living in poverty. Most of the children that I have worked with had social emotional delays, had multiple risk factors that put their development at risk and were in need of mental health and/or early intervention services.

Nancy Deutsch, LCSW - San Diego/Imperial County Chapter

My name is Nancy Deutsch and I have worked in the field early intervention and mental health for over 30 years. Most of that time has been spent with the San Diego City Schools Special Education Early Childhood Program as the Social Worker/ Parent Counselor for the Infant / Toddler Program. I am a Licensed Clinical Social Worker, hold a PPS Credential, I am a Certified Infant Message Instructor and maintain memberships in a variety of organizations and groups that are committed to infants, toddlers and their families. I am especially interested in fostering with in Early Intervention Programs, relationship based intervention and early childhood and family mental health. Towards that end, I have participated in the development of a concept paper in order to establish THE YOUNG CHILD INSTITUTE: San Diego's Hub for Social Emotional Development and School Readiness. I have a passion for this field and the interdisciplinary work that IDA represents.

Lisa Dittbenner, BS, OTR/L – Southern California Chapter

My name is Lisa Dittbenner. I seek to continue my service as South Chapter Secretary. I am an Occupational Therapy Instructor for California Children's Services of Los Angeles County. I have over twenty years of experience in pediatrics. Although I work with children with special needs of all ages, I feel that we can have the greatest impact when we provide needed programs and services to our youngest clients and their families. The position of South Chapter Secretary has given me an opportunity to not only learn more about the concerns of the children, families and providers in Early Intervention, but has allowed me to give to this great organization one of our most precious resources - time.

Emily Dolton - San Diego/Imperial County Chapter

My name is Emily Dolton. I am a business owner and the mom of two sons aged 2 and 3. My two year old has 22Q 11.2 Deletion. Involvement in community and parent groups has taught me that an informed and confident parent is a vital part of the success of every child. It is my great desire to aid our board in providing training so that every parent is educated on how to promote the healthiest and happiest environment for their child, that parents feel empowered to advocate for their children, and that children receive the earliest and best care possible.

Casey Dorman, Ph.D. - Southern California Chapter

I am currently Coordinator of Training for the County of Orange, Behavioral Health Services. I am a child psychologist and have previously worked as a private practitioner, as Chief Psychologist in a hospital for disabled children, and as a university professor and researcher in the area of children's learning disabilities. I have been a member and co-chair of Orange County's CRIBS Council, a parent/professional organization related to disabled infants and young children, was formerly a board member of the Orange County Children's Therapeutic Art Center, and am a founding member of the Orange County Early Childhood Mental Health Collaboration. I am currently active at the county and state level in implementing proposition 63, the Mental Health Service Act.

Jan Gallo, MS - San Diego/Imperial County Chapter

My name is Jan Gallo. I retired from the San Diego County Office of Education in August of 2004. I served the HOPE Program as a Special Education Program Manager. During my 29 years with the HOPE Program I filled many roles: home teacher, parent group facilitator, Professional Partner of the Exceptional Family Resource Center and Program Administrator for regional and program-wide responsibilities. The opportunity to work directly with parents of children with disabilities was the most rewarding of all. My achievements as an early interventionist are attributable to the many things I learned directly from families. I have enjoyed by service on the San Diego/Imperial County IDA Board during the last 3 years.

Gina Guarneri, MA - River Valley Chapter

I have been involved in early intervention for 25 years as a teacher/home visitor, program administrator, and part-time faculty at the university. I have been an active IDA member during my 25 years working in early intervention. I am interested in developing new and innovative methods for IDA to support it's membership: families with young children with special needs and the staff that devote their time, talent and heart to provide quality intervention and family support.

Mary Holland, MS – Southern California Chapter

My name is Mary Holland and I am currently a member and past co-chair of the Southern California Chapter of IDA. I have also been involved with the conference and training committees for a number of years. I have been a member for over twenty years. I have worked with infants and toddlers and their families for 30 years and I have been involved with vendored early intervention programs for 25 years. I have a Master's degree in child development and a child life specialist certification. IDA has always been on the cutting edge of trainings in the field of early intervention and has been a strong supporter of providing quality services to families through qualified personnel. IDA has also been a consistent voice for the families and children with special needs. I would like to continue to serve as an IDA board member to help continue the work that IDA does on behalf of children, families, and all of us who are involved in early intervention.

Diana Jorgensen, MSW, LCSW - Northern California Chapter

I am formerly the Director of the Medically Vulnerable Infant Program - Contra Costa County where I worked for approximately 12 years. I have been the Director of the Developmental Disabilities Council of Contra Costa County for twenty years. I have worked as a Manager at the Regional Center of the East Bay and was Acting Director of Case Management at the time that I left the agency (late 1970's). Also worked for San Francisco Schools in the Visually Impaired program and Richmond Unified School District in the Pre-School program as a mental health specialist and with Contra Costa County Office of Education, Special Education as a school social worker. Professionally, I have my MSW and LCSW. I have done clinical work with children and families over the years.

Julie Kingsley - San Diego/Imperial County Chapter

I have worked with families of children with disabilities for over 15 years through the Exceptional Family Resource Center and the HOPE Infant Family Support Program. I am a parent of a young woman with cerebral palsy and as such I have a deep respect for persons with disabilities, their families and the professionals who work with them. I feel that knowledgeable and sensitive professionals are vital to a family successfully navigating through the unexpected and sometimes difficult changes in their life due to having a child with a disability. I believe that IDA provides state of the art training for professionals and parents and I am proud to be a part of this excellent organization.

Ann Langston-Dykes, MS - Southern California Chapter

My Bachelor's Degree is in Human Services from California State University, Fullerton and my Master's Degree is in Counseling from CSUF as well. In addition to an emphasis in Marriage and Family Therapy, I also obtained a Pupil Personnel Credential for use in public schools. From 1997 to 2000 I worked at Mariposa Women's Center as a Counselor in the Women's Substance Abuse Program and as a Marriage, Family Therapist Intern for the Family Program. I have been with Orange County Head Start since September of 2000 starting as a Mental Health Specialist while finishing my internship hours. I served as a Program Services Coordinator, supervising one of the three multidisciplinary teams, from August 2002 until August 2004. In November of 2004 I became a state licensed Marriage Family Therapist and in January of 2005 I became the Manager of Mental Health Services. Since becoming Manager I have implemented yearly pre-service training for the cadre of MFT Trainees and Interns

volunteering at OCHS in order to acquire hours toward licensure and am certified to provide them clinical supervision as well.

Judy Linnan, Ph.D. – Southern California Chapter

I am employed as a Psychoanalyst for Berkeley Psychological Services, and, also, Director. Full Time, Private Practice with a focus on children and adult analysis. I am also employed by the PYLUSD as Service Coordinator for Part C for NEOC SELPA.

My work history: Probation Officer, Juvenile Hall, Social Worker, Child Welfare, Foster Home Placement, Employment Supervisor, all with L.A. Co. CSULB Counseling Center, Founder-Director--Pacific Academy--Fullerton--SED Facility--member--Psychiatric Medical Group, OC,--Director of Communication and Psychological Services--So. Calif. College of Optometry.--developed course in communication skills--now-prerequisite for all Optometry. Colleges in US. Worked with Connie Lillas, a true high point, with her Neuro-Bio-Psychoanalytic Aspects of Development of the Brain 0-3--Cedars--Head District Psychologist--FUHSD.

Christine Lynch-Muecke, M.Ed. - San Diego/Imperial County Chapter

My first position as a special education teacher in mental health facility and member of a milieu therapy team for eight years helped prepare me for my second position as an early interventionist for the past 20 years. I am currently teaching graduate students at San Diego State University interested in becoming early childhood educators. I am a trainer for WestEd in the area of Natural Environments. I have served on the Child Protection Team at Children's Hospital weekly for 15 years. I am certified as an Infant Massage Instructor, and have enjoyed teaching graduate students in Special Education at San Diego State and the University of San Diego. Serving on the IDA board will be a privilege as we strengthen our professional community and our services to infants and their families.

Mosey Meszaros, BS – River Valley Chapter

I have spent 31 years with the Yolo County Office of Education as an Early Start special education teacher. I learn from each family and baby I work and play with and I'm grateful to the families for sharing their knowledge, strengths, culture, triumphs and struggles with me.

I have been a member of the Infant Development Association of California since 1981, benefiting from the quality trainings, conferences and networking opportunities IDA provides. In 1996 a group of us from a wide area in Northern California formed a third chapter of IDA. We began the River-Valley Chapter and agreed to focus on grass root, informal trainings as well as public policy activities because of our close proximity to the capital. I am honored to continue to be a member of the Board of Directors representing the membership of the River-Valley Chapter of IDA. As an Early Intervention Teacher I value the experiences and knowledge I've received because of rich, quality opportunities IDA has provided.

Robin Millar, BS – Southern California Chapter

I have worked with families and their infants, toddlers and/or children with identified needs as a physical therapist for 40 years. I currently am the Administrative Director of Child Development Services at Simi Valley Hospital (which includes a therapeutic clinic - the Child Development Center and a pre-school, the Family Connection). My experiences as a therapist, early interventionist, manager, and administrator have provided me with many valuable insights, experiences and learning opportunities. I love working with people.

I currently serve on the Board of Directors of Child Development Resources, Inc. of Ventura County (agency providing Head Start and Resource and Referral for the county) and am a Community Representative for the State Interagency Coordinating Council. I participate locally in the Ventura County ICC as well as Ventura County First 5 Neighborhoods for Learning. I would consider it an honor to continue to serve on the IDA board and have been a member since the early 1980's.

Jane Nelson, MSW, LCSW - San Diego/Imperial County Chapter

I am a Licensed Clinical Social Worker, recently hired by Sunny Days Early Childhood Developmental Services, Inc., an infant development program serving children 0-3 in natural environments, as the Program Supervisor. For 23 years, I have held a variety of positions at the San Diego Regional Center including: Service Coordinator - carrying infants and toddlers in the CA Early Start Program, Early Start Specialist - providing staff development and program design for CA Early Start and recently as Program Manager - supervising Service Coordinators in CA

Early Start. I have been involved with IDA throughout the years in a variety of roles including attendee at trainings, presenter at IDA conference, contributor of article to newsletter and providing leadership in the formation of the San Diego/Imperial County local chapter. My interest is in training and staff development. I am also excited about the networking possibilities offered by a local IDA chapter.

Melanie Paez Nicolas, MA - River Valley Chapter

I am currently a Program Officer with the Sacramento Employment and Training Agency (SETA) Head Start in Sacramento County. SETA Head Start and Early Head Start administers the program to over 7,000 children ages 0-5 and their families in the urban and rural areas of Sacramento County. I have worked in the areas of early childhood mental health and family support systems for over 17 years. My previous positions in Head Start included Mental Health Social Worker, Social Services/Parent Involvement Coordinator, and prior to her current position, Mental Health Coordinator. Working strongly with community partners, I have helped the Head Start program implement a therapeutic preschool model that combines mental health services delivery with a system of comprehensive services including education, health, nutrition, disabilities and family involvement in two local Head Start centers.

A naturalized U.S. citizen, I am originally from the Philippines and have lived in the Sacramento area since 1993. I hold a Master of Arts degree in Psychology with a child and family development concentration.

Krista Peterson, MSW - Northern California Chapter

My name is Krista Peterson. I have been a member of the Infant Development Association since 1999. I hold a Master's degree in Social Work with an emphasis in the clinical tracks of medical and mental health. I'm in the process of working towards my LCSW. Currently, I am the Pediatric Outpatient Medical Social Worker for the Contra Costa County Child Development Clinic and Outpatient Clinics. It continues to be my passion to advocate and support infants and toddlers and their families to ensure quality services are provided. I am committed to being an active member and look forward to making a difference in the zero to three population by heightening awareness and providing information and education to families and professionals as part of the IDA board.

Joan Reese, MD - San Diego/Imperial Valley Chapter

My name is Joan Reese. A board certified pediatrician, I was part of the very first group of developmental pediatricians and neurologists that attained subspecialty certification in neurodevelopmental disabilities when this was initially offered in 2001. During the past more than twenty years that I've worked at San Diego Regional Center for the Developmentally Disabled, one of the highlights of my position has been conducting medical, developmental and multidisciplinary team assessments of infants and toddlers. I especially enjoy interaction and collaboration with families and early intervention professionals. Another particular interest is meeting the unique needs of teen and developmentally disabled parents to assure optimal outcomes for their children. I've been a long term member of the San Diego chapter of the AAP's Committee on Children with Disabilities and am committed to improving access to appropriate healthcare, developmental and educational services for all children. Over the past several years I've become increasingly interested in developing ways to better address the social and emotional needs of young children and have been involved in various related community endeavors. I have appreciated the opportunity during the past two years to become even more involved through participation on the board of the San Diego/Imperial Valley chapter of IDA and look forward to the year ahead.

Ruth Rosner, BA – Southern California Chapter

I hold a credential to teach the blind and visually impaired, birth to age twenty-two and a general elementary credential. I have been involved with education since 1961 when I graduated from California State University Los Angeles. My primary focus for the last twenty-five years has been infants, birth to three years of age and their families.

In my position with the Los Angeles Unified School District's Infant Support Services as Intake Teacher/Service Coordinator I am responsible for:

- Assessments
- Individualized Family Service Plans [IFSP]
- Trans-disciplinary and inter- agency collaboration
- Transition to preschool
- Individualized Educational Plan [IEP] at three years of age
- Providing support services for a child with a severe visual impairment and their family

Support to staff

The Infant Development Association, professionals, families and caregivers are concerned with the wellbeing of infants and families. IDA provides a forum for research and development and the sharing of information.

Elizabeth Russel, Ph.D., OTR/L – Southern California Chapter

Greetings IDA members. I would like to continue in the position of treasurer for the Infant Development Association of California. My educational background includes a BA in occupational therapy, MA in special education administration, and a Ph.D. in occupational science. I have had a wonderful career including clinical practice with diverse pediatric populations - neonatal, auditory impaired, visually impaired, cerebral palsy, developmental delay, learning disabled, and sensory integration impaired. Experience in these areas as well as in administration, supervision, and education have given the background that I bring to the work of treasurer, most notably skills in organization and critical thinking.

Linda Scarpa, MA, LEP - San Diego/Imperial Valley Chapter

My name is Linda Scarpa. I have been on the IDA board for the past 10 months. I am currently employed as the Special Education Program Manager of the HOPE Infant and Toddler Family Support Program for the San Diego County Department of Education. The importance of early intervention and providing service to families that is reflective and relationship based is so evident to me in my professional role and my work on IDA. I would like to continue this work on the IDA board.

Barbara Sheehy, MS - Northern California Chapter

I am a California Children Services Administrator and Child Health and Disability Prevention Deputy Director in Contra Costa County. I received my B.A. in Psychology from the University of Colorado, Boulder in 1980, and my M.S. in Speech Pathology from the University of Wisconsin, Madison in 1985. Earlier in my career I worked as a Speech-Language Pathologist at Children's Hospital Oakland, Special Needs Services Manager for Tri Cities Children's Centers, Learning Coach with Early Head Start Training Program and Center Manager with On Lok Senior Health.

Kathryn Skrabo, MSW - River Valley Chapter

I have been involved in early intervention directly and indirectly for many years. As a parent I participated in a parent preschool cooperative for four years and taught preschool for one year. Over the past 18 years in my career as a social worker I have worked on issues affecting children at both the state and local level, however in my current position with Sacramento County Division of Mental Health I am the early childhood mental health program coordinator and work with programs that serve the youngest children. I am interested in supporting all aspects of the whole child and am especially interested in system change and policy development.

Nancy Sweet, MA – Northern California Chapter

My name is Nancy Sweet. I am currently a member of the Northern California Chapter and of the Public Policy Committee. I would like to continue to contribute to IDA as an elected Board member. I have worked in early intervention for 33 years, first as an infant development specialist with a Master's degree in developmental psychology, then for much of my career, as a program director and developer. I helped to form IDA as a statewide organization, to meet the training communication and advocacy needs of programs serving infants with a wide range of special needs, and their families. I also served several times as State Chair, and for many years as IDA's Public Policy Liaison. It will be an honor to continue to support our field through this wonderful organization.

Karen Tanner, MA – Northern California

My name is Karen Tanner. I have been a member of the IDA North Chapter Board since its inception in the 80's. Serving on IDA's board has given me the opportunity to both support families with young children with special needs and be engaged with others working to improve services in the field of Early Intervention. I have a Master's degree in Education/Special Education and a teaching credential in Early Childhood Special Education. I work with the Parent Infant Program at Children's Hospital, Oakland with families who have young children with special needs and with families in a residential treatment program. Additionally I train and consult with community programs providing developmental playgroups. I am most interested in training opportunities for those in the field of Early Intervention and families and in developing IDA's organizational efforts for improving services for families. I feel

IDA is the primary organization in California for providing information, education, support and opportunities for early interventionists, concentrating on the birth to three population of children with special needs and their families.

Julie Taren, MA – Southern California Chapter

Since, 1978, I have been a member of Infant Development Association (IDA). Over the years I have been active by working on state conferences, as State Chairperson and currently as a Co-Chair of the Research & Development Committee. I stay involved because IDA remains an important and relevant organization in California. It has maintained its strong commitment to our youngest children with special needs, their families and the many professionals who work with infants, toddlers and their families. The newsletter and trainings cover a wide choice of relevant topics that helps keep me connected and current to the early intervention field. This is why I want to continue on the Board and encourage others to join IDA.

Angela Thanyachareon - San Diego/Imperial Valley Chapter

I am a Stay At Home Mom as well as a Volunteer Special Education Advocate/Attorney. I have been married for 11 years and we have a five year old son, Brandon, who has been diagnosed with Down Syndrome. I often attend conferences on special education advocacy and law. I am a member of Council of Parents, Attorneys, and Advocates, California Association for Parent-Child Advocacy, Infant Development Association of San Diego/Imperial Valley Board of Directors, IDA Public Policy and State Management Committees. I am Secretary and Treasurer of the La Quinta Villas Home Association Board of Directors. I am active in the Down Syndrome Association of San Diego and Down Syndrome Action. I am a Court Appointed Special Advocate for foster children in special education. I volunteer for the Chula Vista Elementary School District.

Michele Tompkins, MA – Northern California Chapter

I have been an IDA Member for the past 19 years and cannot begin to describe the wealth of information and training I have received through my affiliation with this organization. I have been a Board Member for the past six years and would like to continue in this role as part of my giving back and passing forward what I have gained from IDA through trainings and collaborations. I am currently the chair of the IDA Communications Committee. I hold a Master's degree as a teacher of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing and have worked in a variety of settings over the past 27 years in my field. For the past 18 years I have worked in the field of early intervention and parent-infant education. I have recently completed a fellowship through Boston Children's Hospital and Harvard Medical School and I am now a certified Infant-Parent Mental Health Specialist. I hope to continue as an IDA Board member to continue to support both families and professionals in their work with young children with special needs, in addition to bringing the perspective of the low-incidence population to the IDA table. I would be greatly honored to continue working with IDA.

Sally Van Winkle, BA - San Diego/Imperial County Chapter

No bio.

Margie Wagner, M.Ed. – Southern California Chapter

President, Child Development Media, Inc. My participation in IDA began in 1983 prior to IDA becoming a statewide organization. At that time I was the Director of the Child Life Program at Children's Hospital Los Angeles. The commitment of IDA to the training of parents and providers and to impacting public policy to benefit young children, their parents, and those who serve them has always been a compelling mission. In the service of these goals I have continually worked in a range positions at all levels of the Board including Chair of the Executive Board and Chair of the Southern California Board. Two of my favorite responsibilities have been as chair of the Training Committee and, currently, as a member of the Communications Committee and contribute video reviews to the newsletter. It is a genuine pleasure for me to use what I know about young children, training, and resources to further the goals of IDA.

Sandi Walters MS - Southern California Chapter

My name is Sandi Walters and I have been a member of IDA for about 15 years. I have attended and presented at the IDA conference several times. I am a Technical Assistance Specialist for Inclusive Practice with Beginning Together, a project of WestEd Center for Child and Family Studies. I have been working with and on behalf of children with special needs and disabilities for 25 years. I am happy to have the opportunity to work with the Board of IDA.

Gregory D. Wells, BA - San Diego/Imperial County Chapter

I have been nominated to serve as the treasurer of the San Diego Chapter. I am currently employed as a commercial real estate broker at Grubb & Ellis/BRE Commercial in San Diego. I have been in the commercial real estate business for 10 years and specialize in the sale of investment properties. I have a Bachelor of Arts degree in Business Administration with a Finance emphasis from Point Loma Nazarene University in San Diego. More importantly, I am the father of beautiful 3-year old little girl. Our daughter has experienced developmental delays and has been diagnosed with Cerebral Palsy and microcephaly. Through this process we have been actively involved with the San Diego Regional Center with their Alcott Infant Program and California Children's Services (CCS). Both of these programs have provided wonderful resources and services. I am excited about the opportunity to be actively involved with IDA so I can help reach out to parents and children coping with some of the same issues we are.

Diana White, MFT - River Valley Chapter

I have worked with a variety of age groups and populations over the last 15 years. Some of this time was as a Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor for adults with special needs which included counseling and training to allow those individuals the least restrictive work environment that met their expressed goals. I also worked with grade school and teen aged youth in a classroom setting for individuals with developmental disabilities, cerebral palsy and seizure disorders. I then became interested in the Infant Preschool population after attending a variety of trainings and conferences focusing on this issue. I returned to college in a two-year post graduate infant preschool mental health program. I completed this program in 2006. I have used this training to work and supervise work done with preschoolers with severe behavioral disturbances, regulatory disorders, possible autism spectrum disorders, prenatal alcohol and drug exposure and those born to mothers who have risk factors that could disrupt their attachment to their infants such as mental health diagnoses, substance abuse issues, and teen-age mothers. I provide training on these issues to Turning Point staff and have provided community training on Attachment. I am also the sister of an individual with Asperger's disorder who did not receive needed assistance as a young child which resulted in extended state hospitalization as an adult. This also fuels my passion for early intervention and prevention.